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STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

November 29, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Mrs. Heidi Capraro, 2004-2005 Michigan Teacher of the Year

SUBJECT: Report on Teacher of the Year Activities for November 2004

November Activities

- National Science Teachers Association Conference
- National Middle Level Science Teachers Association Board Meeting and Ice Cream Social
- Indianapolis Children's Science Museum, Desserts and Dinosaurs Event
- Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP)
- State Board of Education Meeting
- AT&T / MACUL Student Technology Showcase
- Michigan Partners in Learning, Microsoft meeting

Reflections

I traveled to Indiana to attend the National Science Teachers Association's (NSTA) regional conference in Indianapolis. The National Middle Level Science Teachers Association (NMLSTA) is an affiliate of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). As President-Elect of NMLSTA, I attended the organization's board meeting and attended NMLSTA sponsored sessions. I was host for the association's Ice Cream Social which gives middle level science teachers across the country an opportunity to network with each other. A highlight of the conference was a special evening sponsored through NSTA at the largest children's science museum in the country. The evening, at the Indianapolis Children's Science Museum, was reserved for NSTA members. Desserts and Dinosaurs was the pinnacle of this conference for me. Besides tables of wonderful desserts, the collections of actual fossil exhibits and interactive learning experiences for children were superb!

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I was honored to give a welcoming speech to children, teachers, and guests at the AT&T / MACUL Student Technology Showcase. The event, held at the Michigan State Capitol Building, was filled with children from all over the state, proudly showing the guests their technology projects. I was amazed at the application of technology integration into every area of education. I listened as a clarinet player site read two lines of music from her computer. The music program that she was using then responded to her, showing her incorrect notes, or notes that were played slightly flat or sharp. I admired wood working projects made by students in Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools who were selling their beautiful tables to help support the costs of purchasing equipment for their school's program. I watched as a high school student soldered together wires to a small electronic board on the back of a blinking eyed, happy face button, which she gave to me as a souvenir when she finished. Every booth was creative and had children of all ages explaining how technology makes their learning fun. The children and teachers were all excited to share their experiences with me, and I tremendously enjoyed learning about the students and their projects.